

JOCHELSON, THE KORYAK.

451

342 I saw among the rich Reindeer Chukchee of the Kolyma River, in which it was possible to stand up comfortably. The height of the Koryak inner tent varies from 1.3 to 1.5 metres; its length, from 2 to 4 metres; and its width, from 1.3 to 2 metres. To the upper edges of the longer walls, thongs are fastened, by means of which the rear part of the tent is attached to the cross-bar of the frame of the outer tent. The front part, facing the hearth, is tied to a stake (Fig. 59) resting on the cross-bars attached to the frame of the tent.

The floor of the sleeping-room is strewn with willow-branches covered with reindeer-skins. The lower parts of the cover on the rear and side walls of the inner tent are tucked inside, and the bedding is placed upon them; while the cover of the front wall is tucked under only when the inmates go to bed.¹ I shall dwell here only on the difference between the Koryak and the Chukchee in the use of the inner tent.

356 The Koryak seldom break up their inner tent in order to beat it on the snow and dry it. They dry it during the day by lifting up the front part of the cover. Thus the dampness collected from the exhalations of the sleepers during the night, and lodged in the hair of the skins, and the vapors rising from the tea and warm food, mixed with dirt and fat, are only partially dissipated during the day. For this reason the inner tents of the Koryak are dirtier than are those of the Chukchee.

512 In the evening the inner tent is closed, the lamp is lighted, and the family drink tea and take supper. At this time the skin dwelling gets heated to such a degree that the men strip off their coats and remain half naked.² During the night the fur sleeping-tent gets cooled off, so that the temperature inside is but three or four degrees higher than that prevailing outside.

342 A Koryak tent seldom has less than three or four inner sleeping-tents. The master, the families of his relatives and of his herdsmen, live in the same tent; and often members of the same tribe, not related, but wandering together, live in one tent.

511 During the fair on the Palpal (see Plate XIX, Fig. 2) the Reindeer Koryak put up one common tent with two hearths placed like the foci of an ellipse, and with a passageway, on the two sides of which were sixteen inner tents (eight on each side). Over a hundred persons occupied this tent, the longer diameter of which exceeded twenty metres in length. Kennan³ mentions a large tent of Reindeer Koryak in northern Kamchatka in which he counted twenty-six inner tents. I had no chance to see tents accommodating so many, except the one at the fair. The large tent of the Taigonos elder (see Plate XIX,

¹ For a detailed description of this dwelling, see Bogoras, *The Chukchee*, Vol. VII of this series, p. 169.

² It is curious to note, that, while the Chukchee women take off their clothing down to the waist-line, even in the presence of strangers, the Koryak women are too modest to do so in the presence of company.

³ See Kennan, p. 197.

JOCHELSON, THE KORYAK. Among the Reindeer Koryak, stone lamps have gone out of use, just as among the Chukchee. They are replaced by found iron frying-pans without handles, which are imported by Russian merchants. The Maritime Koryak relate that in olden times they also made clay lamps (sa'yek, "earthen or clay lamp;" from sa, "earth or clay;" and y'ek, "lamp") such as are still used by the Chukchee and Eskimo; but among the finds made in excavating ancient underground houses, I did not come across a single clay lamp. In one house I found a lamp made of a whale-vertebra (yu'ntemz'ek, i. e., "of bone of whale lamp"). It is represented in Fig. 100.

The lamp of the Maritime Koryak serves for lighting exclusively. Wood is used for heating and cooking. The hearth has been described before.¹ Driftwood is cut in summer and autumn for use as fuel. The wood is split into thin billets 30 cm. or 75 cm. long, which catch fire quickly and do not smoke much. It is stored away on the roof of the house.² The fire is started twice every day, — in the morning, on rising; and in the evening, before going to bed, — at the time of the two principal meals. The morning fire also warms the house for the day, the evening fire for the night. In the middle of the day the fire is rarely started. In general, the sedentary Koryak are saving of their fuel, even in settlements where there is no lack of wood. If guests arrive during the day, a fire is made to make tea and to warm the house.

To a certain degree, the lamp of the Reindeer Koryak heats the sleeping-tent in which it burns; but food and tea are prepared on the hearth, in the outer tent.³ I have never seen food heated over the lamp in the sleeping-tent. Tea and boiled food are served by the women in the sleeping-tent. This, more than the lamp, aids in heating the sleeping-room. Over the lamp, however, wet footwear and mittens are hung to dry; but generally the drying of wet clothes is done in front of the hearth in the outer tent, or by freezing them out of doors, beating off the ice, and then warming them by the fire.

Properly speaking, the Koryak have no furniture whatever. The favorite position is sitting on the ground or on skins, with legs either crossed Turkish fashion or stretched out, or crouching. In the houses of the Maritime Koryak, the low thresholds which divide the sleeping-places from the middle part of the house are always used as seats; and in the outer tents of the Reindeer Koryak the sledges, which are brought in, and on which lie the bags of provisions, are utilized for this purpose.

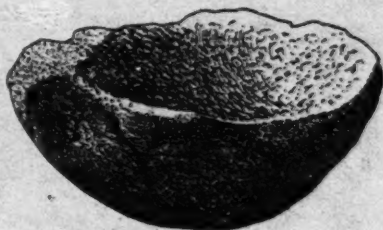


Fig. 100 (131). Lamp made of the Vertebra of a Whale. Length, 14 cm.

¹ See p. 452.

² See p. 459.

³ See p. 459.